Emergency Connectivity Fund Program Newsletter

September 2023

Hurricane Idalia

On September 1, 2023, the Wireline Competition Bureau (WCB) released an Order (DA-23-805) in response to the damage caused by Hurricane Idalia and the affected states of Florida and South Carolina. For Emergency Connectivity Fund (ECF) Program participants located in impacted areas, WCB provided a 150-day extension of the deadlines to submit waivers and appeals and the deadlines to respond to Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) related information requests. Recognizing that there are ECF participants in impacted areas who may have difficulty compiling the necessary documentation and submitting requests ahead of their invoice deadline date (IDD), the first of which falls on October 30, 2023, WCB also waived the October 30, 2023 deadline and extended it by 150 days from the date of the Order for ECF Program participants in the impacted areas. Further, WCB provided impacted program participants with a waiver of the document retention rule for records destroyed by Hurricane Idalia and greater flexibility when requesting service substitutions for eligible equipment or services.

Invoice Appeal Information

For a timely-submitted ECF request for reimbursement (i.e., ECF FCC Form 472 or ECF FCC Form 474) that is denied after the funding request's October 30, 2023 invoice deadline date (IDD), applicants may appeal the decision on the merits within 30 days of the invoicing decision. If the appeal is decided in favor of the applicant, the applicant may then refile an ECF request for reimbursement consistent with any approved appeal within 60 days of the appeal's decision. Instructions on how to file an appeal can be found on the File an Appeal webpage.

For requests that are denied before the IDD, we encourage applicants and service providers to refile the requests for reimbursement with the corrected information before the deadline passes.

Open Data Tool

To determine the amount of funds left on an approved funding request (FRN), please see the ECF Invoice Deadline Tool. Use the instructions provided to locate and identify available funding amounts as well as the expiration date of those funds. The service delivery date(s) and invoice deadline date(s) included in this tool are accurate and consistent with the FCC's recent order.

ECF Program Compliance and Other Friendly Reminders

Please continue to check the ECF Portal and your email communications, and keep your entity information up-to-date in the ECF Portal. It is crucial that your organization does not miss any communication that comes from USAC. For example, the ECF program team may contact you after ECF funds have been disbursed to request payment verification, if you received funds before paying your service provider and have not uploaded the payment verification into the ECF Portal. The ECF program team may also contact you for other post-commitment-related reviews. As a reminder, failure to respond to a USAC information request(s) may lead to denial or recovery of ECF

support, so it is important to timely respond to these requests.

If the Account Administrator you currently have listed in the ECF Portal has changed or is no longer with your organization, call the ECF Customer Support Center (CSC) at (800) 234-9781 and request an update to your information to reflect the name and email address of the new Account Administrator.

For More Information

Please review the [FCC's Emergency Connectivity Fund FAQs](#) to learn more about the program's requirements and commonly asked questions. The FAQs are consistently updated to reflect any program deadline extensions and provide other important details. Additional information is also available in the FCC's [ECF Program Report and Order](#) and in the [March 1, 2023 Public Notice on ECF Compliance Obligations](#).

You can also visit [EmergencyConnectivityFund.org](#) and sign up for [Emergency Connectivity Fund Program emails](#) for more information about the ECF program.

Applicants and service providers can also contact the ECF CSC with questions at (800) 234-9781, Monday – Friday, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. ET, or submit a customer support request through the ECF Portal.

We appreciate your participation in the ECF program and look forward to your on-going engagement as we work together to close the Homework Gap!

Need Help? Contact Us!
Please contact the Emergency Connectivity Fund Customer Service Center (CSC) at (800) 234-9781 or create a case in the ECF Portal.